

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0385

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0481

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, QA, US, OPEC

SUBJ: AMIR OF QATAR'S VIEWS ON PARIS PREPCON

1. SUMMARY: WE HAVE EXPLAINED U.S. VERSION OF EVENTS AT PARIS PREPCON TO AMIR AND HIS ADVISOR. ESSENTIALLY BOTH STAND BY LDC/OPEC POSITION SINCE IT EMANATED FROM ALGIERS OPEC SUMMIT AND SOLEMN DECLARATION. FRENCH AMB'S COMMENTS ON PREPCON HAVE BEEN UNHELPFUL. QATARIS RETAIN LONG-HELD CONVICTION THAT U.S. ENERGY POLICY ESSENTIALLY CONFRONTATIVE AND DESIGNED TO BUST OPEC. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING APRIL 22 CONVERSATION ON OTHER SUBJECTS, I TOOK OCCASION TO EXPLAIN TO SHAYKH KHALIFA BIN HAMAD AL THANI,
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AMIR OF QATAR, U.S. VERSION OF EVENTS AT PARIS PREPCON. I

INFORMED AMIR THAT I HAD BEEN HEARING LOCALLY THAT IT WAS U.S. WHICH CAUSED CONFERENCE BREAKDOWN, AND I WISHED TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT. I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE HAD BEEN BASIC DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ON AGENDA BETWEEN LDC/OPEC GROUP AND CONSUMERS, BUT THAT U.S. AND OTHER CONSUMERS HAD WORKED HARD AND LONG FOR ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE. I NOTED THAT U.S. DELEGATION HEAD, UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON, HAD CANCELLED IMPORTANT TRIPS TO CAIRO AND TEHRAN TO STAY ON AT CONFERENCE IN EFFORT TO WORK FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. I ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT POSITION TAKEN BY CONSUMERS WAS NOT RPT NOT A U.S. ONE, BUT A JOINT U.S./EC/JAPANESE POSITION WHICH HAD BEEN COOPERATIVELY FORMULATED.

3. I REMINDED KHALIFA THAT PREPCON HAD BEEN CALLED TO DISCUSS ENERGY AND ENERGY-RELATED ISSUES, AND THAT IT WAS CONSISTENT U.S. VIEW THAT ENERGY WAS CENTRAL TO ANY DISCUSSION WITH LDC/OPEC GROUP. USG HAD SOUGHT DIALOG, AS EVIDENCED BY THIS CONVERSATION, BY RECENT PARSKY VISIT, AS WELL AS BY PREPCON ITSELF. HOWEVER, IT REMAINED U.S. AND CONSUMER VIEW THAT ENERGY MUST PLAY CENTRAL AND PRIORITY ROLE IN PRODUCER/CONSUMER DIALOG, AND THIS SEEMED ONLY LOGICAL, GIVEN PARTICIPANTS AND SUBJECT MATTER. HOWEVER, I SAID U.S. INSISTENCE ON CENTRALITY OF ENERGY PROBLEM AND ITS LINKAGE TO OTHER ISSUES DID NOT RPT NOT PRECLUDE BROADER DISCUSSION OF OTHER SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO LDC/OPEC GROUP, SUCH AS RAW MATERIALS, DEVELOPMENT ISSUES, INVESTMENT AND MONETARY PROBLEMS, ETC. U.S. TOO WAS INTERESTED IN A NEW WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER, BUT WE DID NOT RPT NOT ENVISAGE THAT THIS COULD BE FORMULATED AT A CONFERENCE DESIGNED TO CONCENTRATE ON ENERGY, WHICH WE REGARDED AS CENTRAL ELEMENT. OTHER SUBJECTS COULD BE DISCUSSED IN OTHER FORUMS AS APPROPRIATE, BUT ATTEMPT TO BRING THEM INTO PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFERENCE WOULD MOST PROBABLY BRING IT TO NAUGHT, TO DETRIMENT OF ALL CONCERNED PARTIES. I SAID THAT OUR INSISTENCE ON ENERGY AS PRIORITY SUBJECT WAS PRAGMATIC RECOGNITION THAT IT ESSENTIAL STARTING POINT FOR DIALOG THAT COULD BE BROADENED IN LATER STAGES.

4. AMIR, NOTING THAT WE WERE RUNNING OUT OF TIME, SAID THAT GOQ, AS OPEC MEMBER, HAD AGREED TO AND STOOD FIRMLY BEHIND POSITIONS DEVELOPED AT ALGIERS SUMMIT AND EMBODIED IN SOLEMN DECLARATION. HE ASSERTED THAT IF U.S. SOLVED MID EAST PROBLEM, IT WOULD FIND DISAGREEMENTS ON AGENDA FOR PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFERENCE WOULD BECOME SIGNIFICANTLY EASED DND, IN GENERAL, PEOPLE WOULD STOP BLAMING U.S. FOR EVERYTHING THEY DIDN'T LIKE IN THIS WORLD. I REMINDED KHALIFA THAT IN RECENT TALK WITH COLUMNIST JOSEPH KRAFT (DOHA 0440), HE HAD SAID THAT MID EAST PROBLEM HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ENERGY SITUATION. AMIR SMILED AND SAID THIS WAS FOR JOURNALISTIC CONSUMPTION. HE CONCLUDED WITH AN EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE THAT A WAY WOULD BE FOUND TO GET PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFERENCE OFF THE GROUND.

5. DURING DINNER CONVERSATION EVENING APRIL 21 WITH DR. HASSAN KAMEL, AMIR'S POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR WHO ALSO INFLUENTIAL ON OIL AFFAIRS, KAMEL CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT U.S. HAD TORPEDOED PREPCON BY WITHDRAWING OF ITS DELEGATION CHIEF FROM PARIS . (KAMEL WAS ONE OF TREASURY ASST SECY PARSKY'S PRINCIPAL INTERLOCUTORS DURING PARSKY VISIT TO DOHA APRIL 12.) FRENCH AMBASSADOR WAS PRESENT DURING CONVERSATION AND CHIMED IN WITH SUCH UNHELPFUL COMMENTS AS "U.S. MUST BE EXTREMELY HAPPY OVER BREAKDOWN OF PREPCON" AND "THERE COULD NEVER BE CONSUMER/PRODUCER CONFERENCE ON ENERGY ALONE".

6. IN REPLY, I MADE SAME POINTS AS THOSE IN PARAGRAPHS 2 AND 3 ABOVE. I EMPHASIZED, PARTICULARLY TO FRENCH AMB, THAT CONSUMER POSITION HAD BEEN JOINT US/EC/JAPANESE EFFORT, AND HE RESPONDED THAT U.S. HAD BULLDOZED OTHER TWO INTO LINE. I SUGGESTED TO FRENCH AMB THAT GOF SOUNDINGS PRIOR TO CONFERENCE APPARENTLY LEFT SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED, SINCE CONFRONTATION OVER AGENDA APPARENTLY UNEXPECTED. I ASSERTED THAT CONSUMER EFFORTS TO REACH ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE HAD NOT MET WITH MUCH RECEPTIVITY FROM LDC/OPEC GROUP, AND I DID NOT ACCEPT POINTING FINGER OF BLAME AT U.S.

7. KAMEL ANSWERED THAT HE WAS GREATLY DISAPPOINTED THAT SUCH ENLIGHTENED DOCUMENT AS OPEC SOLEMN DECLARATION, WHICH BASIS OF LDC/OPEC POSITION AT PREPCON, HAD BEEN REBUFFED BY U.S. AND OTHER CONSUMERS. HE DID NOT RPT NOT SEE HOW BETTER OR MORE REASONABLE POSITION COULD BE EXPECTED. HE CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, WITH EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT CONSUMER/PRODUCER MEETING WOULD BE PUT BACK ON THE TRACKS SINCE THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE. WE AT LEAST AGREED ON THAT POINT.

8. COMMENT: I AM CERTAIN THAT ALL OF THIS PALAVER HAS NOT
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CONVINCED EITHER AMIR OR KAMEL THAT U.S. ENERGY POLICY IS COOPERATIVE RATHER THAN CONFRONTATIVE. QATARIS HAVE FIRMLY BELIEVED FOR SOME TIME, AND BEFORE PREPCON, THAT WE ARE OUT TO BUST OPEC. PREPCON EVENTS HAVE FURTHER CONFIRMED THIS VIEW. FRENCH AMB WAS LESS THAN HELPFUL, AND I SUSPECT THAT FRENCH ARE SAYING SIMILAR THINGS IN OTHER PLACES. "NEW WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER" SYNDROME HAS MADE DEEP IMPRESSION ON GOQ, AND, EVEN THOUGH ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS MAY NOT BE PERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD, QATARIS HAVE ADOPTED IT AS ARTICLE OF FAITH. ALL CONTENDING PARTIES APPEAR TO AGREE ON JUST ONE THING, I.E., THAT PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFERENCE MUST HAPPEN AND IT SHOULD BE RETRACKED SOONEST.
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